BALLARAT FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

EXCURSION / NEWS SHEET - NO. 4. AUGUST, 1974.

President: Mr. H. Hooper, Gracefield Road, Brown Hill.
Hon. Secretary: Mr. P. Fry, 19 Stawell Street, Ballarat.
Treasurer: Mrs. E. Bedggood, 809 Barkly Street, Mt. Pleasant.

EXCURSION: Canadian Bushland. Sunday, 4th August.
Meet At Crockers Store in Armstrong Street at 1.25 p.m. to allot seating. Depart at 1.30. The area of approximately 300 acres to be visited is bounded by York Street, Boundary Road, Clayton Street and Long Road, and is the section of Canadian Reserved Forest that our Club regards should be left under its present land tenure until the Land Conservation Council has made recommendations as to its best land-use. Travel to the end of Eureka Street, then past new house on left and white post with red top on right. Turn sharp right at yellow post on right. Proceed keeping pine plantation on left. This track leads to Boundary Road. Return to Ballarat via Clayton Street. There is "die-back" among the grass trees in the area, and Mr. Brisbane of the Forests Commission is investigating the cause. It will be serious if the "die-back" is due to the cinnamon fungi.

TONIGHT: The main part of tonight's meeting will be an "open forum", when several matters affecting the Club will be discussed. Members are invited to discuss any matters of interest and to join in the discussion.

WEEKEND CAMP-OUT: The Committee have decided to hold a camp-out in the Big Desert on the weekend 31st August - 1st September. The main purpose of this excursion is to give members an idea of the Mallee country, so that our Club can prepare a submission to the Land Conservation Council in due course. The camp site will be in the Big Desert, north of Yanac. Travel along the Western Highway through Horsham to Nhill, then leave the Highway and travel to Yanac, approximately 20 miles further (185 miles from Ballarat). An early start will be needed on the Saturday morning, and members will meet at the Yanac silos at 11 a.m. Some members may wish to leave Ballarat on the Friday (30th August). Car drivers are recommended to fill up with petrol at Nhill. More details will be available at the meeting tonight.

LAST MONTH: Due to the inclement weather, only two cars arrived at Crockers to go on the Creswick excursion, and so both decided they would rather forego the outing for warmer pursuits. The Fry family spent the afternoon making melon jam!

NEXT MONTH: Note the date of the September meeting - 13th - a week later, to avoid a clash with school holidays. The excursion on the 15th will be to the Dunolly bushland and it is hoped that we can meet with members of the Donald History and Natural History Society and explore the area, under the capable leadership of Mr. H. Beer.

SIMPSON DESERT: Mrs. Bedggood is spending a fortnight with a safari group from the Bird Observers Club in the Birdsville - Simpson Desert area. We will all be interested to hear from her on return, as the Desert has been "alive" this year, following the rains last season.

NEWS FROM ALICE SPRINGS: Mr. and Mrs. Spiker report that the weather in Alice Springs has been very fine, with no rain as yet. Although they have not been on any proper "birding" trips so far, Chris has seen many birds of interest and they have had birds such as red-backed kingfisher and spiny-cheeked honeyeater in their backyard.

NATURE SHOW: Members will no doubt have seen the report in the "Nature Notes" about the nature show run by the Creswick Field Naturalists Club. Of particular interest, following our last meeting studying fungi, was the good collection of named specimens, including fly agaric, boletus, "the sickener", dragon's blood, flame fungi and elephant's foot.

SIGNS OF SPRING: Magpies have been observed building nests recently, and a few blackbirds are already singing, so perhaps we are in for an early spring. Also, golden bronze-cuckoos have been calling lately, but they are not a good indicator, as they are likely to call on any sunny day. Golden wattles are flowering now in several areas.